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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 009391

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CONDEMNATION OF THE NOVEMBER 9 BOMBINGS CONTINUES

REF: A. AMMAN 08957

[B](#). AMMAN 8835

[C](#). AMMAN 8829

[1](#)1. Summary: The November 9 hotel bombings continue to draw condemnation from almost every sector of Jordanian society. The Islamic Action Front, which once regularly praised so-called "resistance" in Iraq, is at pains to distance itself from the attacks and from Zargawi. In early December, 59 Jordanian civil society organizations issued a joint statement labeling the attacks a "contradiction of Islamic teachings," and called for the joining of forces to combat terrorism. Jordanian media aired television programs and songs condemning the bombings, while Abu Musab al-Zargawi's family and tribe publicly disowned him on November 20. End Summary.

IAF FIRM IN DENOUNCING ATTACKS

[1](#)2. The Islamic Action Front (IAF), the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, continues to unequivocally denounce the November 9 bombings. In a statement printed in local media on November 22, IAF Deputy Secretary-General Jamil Abu Baker described the attacks as "criminal acts that cannot be justified." He continued that "similar acts that take place against innocent civilians, whether in Iraq or Palestine or anywhere else are equally condemnable and they cannot be accepted in any way." Similarly, Abdul Latif Arabiyat, president of the IAF's governing Shura council, stated publicly that "Islam does not allow any killing of any innocent people whether the (suicide bombers) blow themselves up in a hotel lobby or a ballroom." This is a notable change of position for both men, who in the past have praised some terrorist attacks that killed Israeli civilians, and have at best remained silent when bombs killed civilians in Iraq.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS SPEAK OUT

[1](#)3. On December 3, 59 civil society organizations called for a common Arab front to combat terrorists and their leaders who lack minimum religious and humanitarian values, and whose actions tarnish Arabic culture and Islamic civilization. The groups released a press statement that said armed struggle against foreign occupation in Iraq and the Palestinian territories is a legitimate right supported by Arab and Muslim people, but that the "blind killings and bombings of innocent civilians and the damaging of civilian and tourist installations contradict Islamic teachings." The group also labeled terrorism as an "excuse for foreign occupation."

CONDEMNATION THROUGH SONG

[1](#)4. Several prominent Jordanian singers recorded "La Ya Amman" ("No, Oh Amman") in the days after the attacks. The tune, heard every hour on both government and private radio during the week following the bombings, is still getting air time. The lyrics express anger at the attacks and solidarity with the victims and their families. An accompanying music video, recorded in just two days, was also aired frequently on local TV.

JORDANIAN BLOGS PILE ON THE BOMBERS

[1](#)5. Jordanian internet bloggers immediately responded to the attacks by posting slogans mourning the victims, condemning Zargawi, and providing photos from outside the bombed hotels. Bloggers have continued to post articles, commentaries, and photos of demonstrations and vigils in the days following the attacks; some received high-level media attention as their sites served as an easy source of information for reporters. Many people using Google and other internet search engines to find information about the Amman bombings have been directed to Jordanian blogs, as the sites are constantly updated and heavily linked.

TV PROGRAM DISCUSSES TERROR ATTACKS

16. State-run Jordan TV ran a widely-viewed program on November 21 entitled "The Story Revealed" that focused on the bombings and included emotional interviews with the bride and groom whose wedding at the Raddison was attacked, in addition to Queen Rania, Director of the Jordan River Foundation Maha al-Khatib, and Jordanian university students. The bride and groom's account moved the studio audience to tears, as did Khatib's stories about the cell phones of the victims that kept ringing for hours after the attacks. Queen Rania stated that the bombings "defied logic and comprehension."

ZARQAWI DISOWNED BY FAMILY

17. On November 20, the family and tribe of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi disowned him in a large advertisement that was carried in several Jordanian newspapers. The statement, which was signed by 76 members of the Khalayleh clan of the prominent Bani Hassan tribe, pledged allegiance to King Abdullah and denounced all terrorist acts claimed by Ahmad Fadeel Khalayleh, Zarqawi's given name. NOTE: A few embassy contacts expressed concern that this disavowal, although intended to further damage Zarqawi's tarnished reputation, would be viewed by some as a government-directed gesture that might reinforce extremist support for Zarqawi and strengthen his "lone hero" image. END NOTE. On November 29, the same newspapers carried another paid advertisement by members of the Bani Hasan tribe, that expressed their support for the Al-Khalayeh clan's disowning of Zarqawi. The advertisement was signed by hundreds of Bani Hasan tribe members.

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